A Study on Use of Virtual Reality for Restaurant Marketing in Mumbai

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Abstract

This paper is intended to create awareness about the use of 360 degree Virtual Reality photography for the food and beverage facilities to have great impact on the hotel and restaurant customers. This is a modest attempt to find out the same.

Definition: A 360 degree photography is a type of photography where in the camera clicks a picture from such an angle that one can get a 360 degree view of the place itself.

The researcher tries this to find out from the Mumbai base restaurants. There were two types of structured questionnaires used for the survey of the restaurant and the common public visits to restaurants. Individual respondents and restaurant managers were asked and addressed this survey forms. Sample size – 300 individuals and 36 restaurants from the central Mumbai.

INTRODUCTION:

Now a days, virtual reality just not a fantasy anymore. The eating out is such a sensory experience, it makes sense that people would start to experiment with how virtual reality can be used in a restaurant setting. The virtual reality is here to stay, or if it's just another fad, like 3D movies, that never really takes off with the average person. It is likely to find a way to make it more popular soon. It seems that VR-related restaurant is expensive because it involves special equipment, but from a marketing point of view there are some fun opportunities. For example, a 360-degree video tour of your restaurant, which allows people to immerse themselves in a setting if they have a VR headset, or to explore in more depth if they don't. This view creates 360-degree angle enhances the experience for the viewer. The most interesting and important thing is that you don't create these videos for the sake of being gimmicky.

How will virtual reality (V.R) help in Restaurant marketing?

360 Degree photos make it easier for people to see a place only by sitting at their homes. In this age it is very common for people to see restaurants online. Photos and videos are very common way of advertising restaurants. But by VR photos one can see all the sides of the restaurant in one photo. Hence VR helps guests to decide whether to book a table there. Also restaurants having VR photos have an upper hand when advertising to their guests. V.R will help restaurants in making their own mark in marketing field and will help in increasing competitiveness. Customers can have a wide idea about the restaurants seating and ambience as well.

OBJECTIVES

1. Ascertain the acceptability of virtual reality photos for restaurants marketing in India.
2. Analyse the penetration of virtual reality devices in India among people using Smartphone's.
3. To find out the platform required for publishing virtual reality content.
4. To understand the market segment which should be targeted for virtual reality content marketing?

RESEARCH GAP

1. Very few marketers have focused on attending to the fact of having V.R as a marketing tool in restaurants in India.
2. Restaurants in Mumbai have not been researched so far.
3. Very few restaurant managers and individual respondents are familiar with V.R technology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

i)   Primary Data:

ii)   Secondary Data

Primary data collected by using Survey method:

Contact methods during survey

- Telephone - interview
- Interview- personal(intercept)
- Sampling technique – probability sampling and random sampling (individual respondent)
- Intercept for restaurant managers

Determining Sample Design:

Who will be surveyed? Individual respondents and restaurant managers

Sample size – 300 individuals and 36 restaurants

This sample size was taken into consideration after calculating the total population of the given 4 areas and then by using Krejcie and Morgan sample table.

Cluster area samples were collected from the restaurants of geographical area of Lower Parel, Bandra, Andheri and Juhu.

Data Collection:

The researcher will conduct survey using questionnaires to obtain primary data.

DATA ANALYSIS:

a) **General Public:**

1. Have you heard about VR technology?

AGE GROUP	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
15-25	143	22	16	181
26-35	57	10	11	78
36-45	22	6	3	31
45 AND ABOVE	5	5	0	10
TOTAL	**227**	43	30	300

Interpretation: It was found that the younger people i.e. people in the age group of 15-25 have heard about the technology.

2. Have you come across 360 degree photos online on your Smartphone or computer?

AGE GROUP	YES	NO	TOTAL
15-25	147	34	181
26-35	59	18	77
36-45	23	8	31
45 AND ABOVE	5	6	11
TOTAL	**234**	66	300

Interpretation: We find that majority of the people from age group 15- 25 and 26-35 as well have seen these photos online, so we can say that it would not be an alien subject to them.

3. Do you consider the ambience, decor, seating of a restaurant before visiting it?

AGEGROUP	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER	TOTAL
15-25	85	84	12	181
26-35	28	43	7	78
36-45	11	17	3	31
45 AND ABOVE	1	9	0	10
TOTAL	125	**153**	22	300

Interpretation: We find that most of the people find that seating, decor and ambience is sometimes important before choosing the restaurant of their choice.

4. How important is internet for you to search or review restaurants?

AGE GROUP	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL
15-25	68	101	12	181
26-35	34	37	7	78
36-45	12	15	3	30
45 AND ABOVE	3	6	2	11
TOTAL	117	**159**	24	300

Interpretation: We can say that, even though internet is accessible to a lot of people, it is very important and somewhat important to people.

5. On an average, how many times a week, do you refer internet to search restaurants?

AGE GROUP	NEVER	LESS THAN 5	5 TO 10	MORE THAN 5	TOTAL
15-25	9	77	64	31	181
26-35	8	36	27	7	78
36-45	3	10	13	5	31
45 AND ABOVE	2	7	1	0	10
TOTAL	22	**130**	105	43	300

Interpretation: We find that almost half of the people use internet to view restaurants less than 5 times a week.

6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how impactful VR photos would be on your decision to choose the restaurant, while checking restaurants online? 1 being the least and 5 being most impactful.

AGE GROUP	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
15-25	11	15	53	60	42	181
26-35	9	6	28	29	6	78
36-45	2	2	9	12	6	31
45 AND ABOVE	0	0	4	5	1	10
TOTAL	22	23	94	**106**	55	300

Interpretation: We find that most people say that they would say 3 or 4 on the scale of 1 to 5.

7. Which sites or apps would you want to see VR Photos of restaurants?

AGE GROUP	GOOGLE	FACEBOOK	ZOMATO	OTHERS	TOTAL
15-25	53	56	108	4	221
26-35	26	26	51	2	105
36-45	12	16	17	0	45
45 AND ABOVE	2	0	8	0	10
TOTAL	93	98	**184**	6	381

Interpretation: Almost two thirds of people chose Zomato as their most preferred app to view VR photos of restaurants.

8. How much potential do you think there is in growth of V.R. technology in India?

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
I DONT KNOW	28
GOOD	**125**
VERY HIGH	107
NO POTENTIAL	22
DEPENDS	7
SOMEWHAT	11
TOTAL	300

Interpretation: There was a common view on the growth that this technology is fairly new for everyday use in India. Also people referred that as India is a developing nation, it is going to develop here in the future. There were some references to the cost effective VR devices in the market. Overall we can say that there is ample potential in the growth of VR technology in India.

b) RESTAURANTS/ RESTAURANT MANAGERS

1. Have you heard about VR Technology?

ANSWER	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
RESPONSES	29	6	1	36

Interpretation: 80% of managers have heard of the technology. Thus it is possible for us the present the research topic.

2. Have you come across 360 degree photos online on your Smartphone or computer?

ANSWERS	YES	NO	TOTAL
RESPONSES	30	6	36

Interpretation: We can see that 83% of managers have seen VR photos, therefore they we can say that they will understand the use of these photos for online marketing.

3. According to you, how important online marketing is for restaurants?

IMPORTANCE	EXTREMELY IMPORATNT	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL	Interpretation:
RESPONSES	16	20	0	0	0	36	

All the restaurant managers said that online marketing is essential for survival of business these days.

4. Is the decor, ambience and view, a USP of your restaurant ?

ANSWERS	YES	NO	TOTAL
RESPONSES	34	2	36

Interpretation: 94% restaurants consider décor, ambience and view as their USP. So, these restaurants could use VR photographs for their marketing.

5. What would you prefer: VR photos or regular photos while marketing restaurants online?

TYPES	REGULAR PHOTOS	V.R. PHOTOS	I DON'T MIND EITHER	TOTAL
RESPONSES	6	16	14	36

Interpretation: 44% managers said that they would use VR photos for marketing.

6. According to you, on a scale of 1 to 5, how impactful VR photos would be on people's decision to choose the restaurant, while checking restaurants online? 1 being least and 5 being most impactful.

IMPACT	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
RESPONSES	1	1	12	12	9	36

Interpretation: We can see 12 restaurants have given 3 and 4 points on the scale respectively. Which means V.R photos can be impactful according to the managers.

7. Which sites or apps would you want to display VR Photos of your restaurant?

APPS	GOOGLE	FACEBOOK	ZOMATO	OTHERS	TOTAL
RESPONSES	14	11	33	3	36

Interpretation: This was a multiple response question; we can see that 54 percent more than half of the mangers think that Zomato is an important platform for online marketing.

8. What percent of guests review your restaurant online after their visit?

PERCENTAGE	LESS THAN20%	20% TO 50%	50% TO 70%	MORE THAN 70%	TOTAL
RESPONSES	8	14	12	3	36

Interpretation: From this information we can say that on an average 20-70% guests review restaurants online.

9) How much potential do you think there is in growth of restaurants in India?

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF MANAGERS
Can't say	1
Average potential	1
Depends	3
Good potential	31
Total	36

Interpretation: A huge number of restaurant managers say that there is a good potential in growth of restaurant business in India.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From analyzing the data collected throughout the research, it can be concluded that the best platforms for publishing virtual reality content for restaurants marketing are social media sites. It can be clearly seen from the data that Zomato would be the most preferred application among the general public as well as restaurant managers for virtual reality photos. People are accepting the use of technology in their day to day life.

The penetration of virtual reality devices in India among the smart phone users is mainly between the age group of 15-24 and 25-34. These devices are mostly used by technologically savvy public.

The best market segments to be targeted for virtual reality content marketing is the age group from 15-35. After discussing with most of the restaurant managers and owners it can be concluded that the use of virtual reality photographs for restaurant marketing in Mumbai can be greatly beneficial for the business only if leading restaurant sites like Zomato support the virtual reality photos of the restaurant. Also the restaurant managers said that this would give them a competitive edge over those restaurants that don't use this technology.

As businesses must evolve with time and adapt the better things innovated gradually, using virtual reality technology is one such thing that has to be adopted in order to remain updated in the competitive market.

CONCLUSION

1. V.R can be used as a great marketing tool for restaurants.
2. Individuals and Restaurant Managers in Mumbai are ready to use V.R Devices.
3. Zomato is preferred platform where people are willing to see the V.R photos.
4. V.R will be of great use in marketing and has a huge scope in India.

Finally we can say that there is ample potential for growth of virtual reality technology in India and therefore the application of this technology in restaurant marketing would be greatly beneficial.

LIMITATIONS

1. Time constraint made the research restricted to only four regions in Mumbai.
2. Travelling expenses are huge which is why the research was made only in 4 regions of Mumbai.
3. Heavy investments are made to buy V.R devices because of which it was difficult to research in depth.

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